

APP_19_00806

Building 6000, Langstone Technology Park

Principal Conservation Officer

Overview

Langstone Technology Park consists of four main buildings of modular construction with minimalist landscaping linking around the buildings.

The site is a 'campus style' industrial park with buildings dating from the early 1970s. Originally built for IBM it housed one of two manufacturing plants in the UK. The smallest building was the first to be built on the site and appears in the In-house Arup Journal April 1971 the caption refers to the building being completed in 1970.

The buildings were designed and built by Arup with landscaping for the courtyard and grounds by James Russell. Design 39 Journal – VADS reports that 'the Financial Times award for industrial architecture 1972' was won by 'the new plant at Havant, Hampshire, designed by Arup Associates'.

In terms of social history, the sites links with the development of the computing technology is of significance. It should be noted that the building has been put forward to Historic England for listing. The outcome of this has yet to be decided.

Proposal

The application is for the proposed erection of a new building entrance to the southern elevation. The works also include the refurbishment of the reception lobby and associated hard and soft landscaping.

Assessment

The current buildings because of their design/construction provenance and social history significance should be considered collectively as non-designated heritage assets. Whilst the existing building are quite plain by todays standards they do represent an era of design and have by their association to Arup a certain level of standing in terms of design. Therefore, any proposed alterations would need to have some gravitas in its own design.

Having looked at the proposals I am of the view that this scheme succeeds in creating a high-quality entrance to the southern elevation. It provides good visual interest to this elevation with the use of structural verticals and glazed elements which strongly mark the entrance. This aspect seems appropriate to the use of the site as an industrial and technological centre. As such the proposals appear to be sympathetic to the character of the existing building. The design is well considered and of an appropriate scale in this location. Complementary materials are proposed to coordinate with the existing built context but also emphasise the alterations proposed. As such I have no objection.